



**Stanley Town Council
Budget Work Session
Official Minutes
Monday, May 7, 2018**

The Stanley Town Council held a budget work session on Monday, May 7, 2018 at Stanley Middle School, following the regular meeting. The following elected officials and staff were present:

Steven Denton, Mayor
Cathy Kirkland, Council Member
Rob McMinn, Council Member
Kerry Hart, Council Member
Bud Pate, Council Member
Danny Sparrow, Mayor Pro-Tem

Heath Jenkins, Town Manager
Catherine Greder, Town Clerk
Olivia Smith, Finance Director
Will Keller, Fire Chief
Derek Summey, Police Chief
Michael Hullett, Deputy Fire Chief

Budget work session one included the police and fire budgets.

The budget work session began with review of the Police Department budget. Chief Summey explained the request for school resource officers as well as the use of these officers in the summer months when school is not in-session. Chief Summey explained that the additional resources can be used to fight drug crime during these months. Chief Summey explained that during the day there is only one officer on-duty and that officer may be gone taking an individual to the jail. He also explained that these potential positions will be valuable to cover summer requests for vacation, sick days and the like.

Mayor Denton asked what amount the County would be reimbursing. Chief Summey explained that the amount would be \$36,000 per position.

Council Member McMinn stated that it is a County officer currently in the middle school.

Council Member Hart stated that this officer is working off-duty.

Chief Summey explained that this officer is essentially working as a security guard. He stated that if a crime occurs at the Stanley Middle School, a Stanley police officer has to come and take that report. He said it is a common misunderstanding that the Gaston County Police Officer working off-duty at the middle school is acting as an officer. Rather, he is acting more so as a security guard. Chief Summey explained that a large number of the problems that the Stanley Police Department has is with communication. He explained that it is important to have a Stanley officer at the school which is in the Stanley Police Department jurisdiction.

Council Member Hart explained that during the next school year, the attendance at the middle school will increase. The numbers are unknown, but Stanley Middle School will be a STEAM Academy and student population will increase.

Council Member McMinn stated that he liked the idea of having a Stanley officer in the school but did not like the cost of it. He stated that he has trouble looking to fund this request when another department has a need that has not been funded. He stated that the County is an alternative option of covering the school without the extra funding from the Town.

Chief Summey stated that the Legislature is looking to mandate a permanent, not off-duty, officer at every school. He stated that they do not like the breakdown in communication or lack of rapport with students and staff. He explained that a trusting relationship is important. He stated that someone working off-duty cannot establish this kind of relationship.

Council Member McMinn asked if the County would fill these positions with full-time employees, like at the high schools. He stated that the County has approved funding.

Chief Summey stated that the funding that was approved by the Commissioners is to fund through the rest of the current school year. Chief Summey explained that it is obviously better if someone else pays for the officers, but that takes away control from the Stanley Police Department and control is critical during an event.

Chief Summey stated that the state will be in session until July but they have not yet funded the initiative.

Chief Summey asked if there were any other questions about the salaries.

Mayor Denton stated that he agrees communication is critical. He stated that there is concern about the cost, but that it is an important matter.

Council Member McMinn stated that the County controls the schools, why not leave the officers to them. He stated that he is sure if there is a major event that the County officer would contact

us. He stated he needed to do more research on the subject. He stated that he agrees there should be a police officer in each school.

Mayor Denton stated that he likes the idea of a permanent person that has a presence in the school.

Mayor Pro-Tem Kirkland agreed that building relationships with the students is important.

Chief Summey explained that a large remainder of the budget line items are staying the same. He explained that the Police Department provides police presence during special events held by the Recreation Department.

Mayor Pro-Tem Kirkland asked about basketball season. Chief Summey explained that there is a separate line item for off-duty pay. He explained that this places a dedicated officer at the gym during basketball games, rather than the on-duty officer that may have to leave to run a call.

Chief Summey explained that the training line includes funding for ammo, as they qualify twice per year.

Chief Summey explained that the budget included requests for updated computer equipment, additional rifles, and some office furniture.

Chief Summey explained that the department needs additional software licenses as they currently do not have enough for all staff on any shift to be on at one time. He often has to call and ask someone to log out so another officer can put a report into the system. Chief Summey also explained that they are in need of a new phone system as a component in their current system is failing and will cost \$2500 to replace because the system is so old and parts are not easily obtained. He explained that the new phone system would be \$5500 and a much better investment.

Mayor Denton explained that the largest discussion would be regarding the SRO positions. Mayor Denton stated he understands how Council Member McMinn feels and asked each other member to share their thoughts. Council Members: Kirkland, Hart, Pate and Sparrow all expressed that they would like to have a Stanley Police Officer in the schools.

Council Member McMinn stated that at some point the Town will feel a revenue hit from DSM leaving.

Council Member McMinn stated that the resource officers at the middle school are individuals that the students are familiar with, except for possibly one that they may be less familiar with. Council Member McMinn reiterated that he believes the officers should be a county function since it is a county facility.

Council Member Sparrow stated that he believes the schools need officers. He expressed sympathy for the Police Department over the lack of resources to keep criminals off the streets.

Chief Summey stated that there is no guarantee that County officers will be in the schools. He stated that there is a meeting scheduled with Superintendent Booker to discuss the SRO matter. Chief Summey stated that there is already a struggle to get off-duty shifts covered. He stated that there are not necessarily just going to put an officer in the school, it would be put out as an off-duty option for the County or the Sheriff's office. Chief Summey stated the legislature is discussing that they no longer want splitting, they want an officer in every school. He stated that we would need to fill the void between Kiser or Springfield and the rest of the schools that have not had coverage and there are already uncovered off-duty shifts.

Council Member Hart asked what other Towns are doing. Chief Summey stated that Belmont and Mount Holly are going to put their officers in their schools.

Council Member McMinn stated that the cost would be \$90,000 a year for these officers. Chief Summey stated this is not the case. Manager Jenkins explained that the vehicles would not be recurring expenses. Chief Summey explained that the Town's cost for two officers would be \$103,200. He explained that the County reimburses the Town \$72,000 total for the two positions; leaving a total expense for the Town of \$31,200 in salary and all benefits. The Town would be responsible for the cars, but the County funds \$72,000 worth of salary and benefits.

Council Member McMinn stated that we could fund one officer and leave the County at the middle school. Manager Jenkins explained that the Middle School is the most important school to have a Stanley officer in.

Chief Summey explained that some of the off-duty shifts are left open. Council Member McMinn asked for record of such.

Council Member Sparrow asked about vehicles. Chief Summey explained his only vehicle requests are for the SRO vehicles. Manager Jenkins explained that the entire amount is budgeted, but the loan comes in on the revenue side and the payments on the expenditure side. He explained this is the way that it is required to be budgeted and that it is indeed confusing.

Council Member McMinn asked about replacing vehicles. Chief Summey stated that if he pushed it, he would need to replace two vehicles next year.

This concluded the discussion of the police department budget. Manager Jenkins excused Chief Summey from the work session.

Chief Keller and Deputy Chief Hullett presented the Fire Department budget.

Chief Keller stated that he apologizes for his large requests. He stated that his requests have not changed and that his main priority is still staffing. He stated that he has added additional questions to the reporting system to collect additional data for the Council. He reminded the Council that the Fire Department does have minimum standards that must be met. These relate largely to OSHA and ISO ratings. He stated that it is his goal to have four people respond to every call. He stated they are averaging two people and they cannot run a fire department with two people. He stated that they responded to a fire with two people, it then took seven departments to run that fire. He explained that the help around us is not there like it used to be. He said they rely on surrounding departments, as they rely on us. Chief Keller explained that the department is not providing the service that they need to be and other departments will not be as willing to help when we are not helping them. He explained that OSHA requires a two-in, two-out rule – there must be two firefighters outside for the two inside, should something happen. Chief Keller stated they cannot go into a fire until four people are on-scene.

Mayor Denton asked for clarification on the number of people. Chief Keller explained that the goal is to have four people on shift because four people are the minimum to fight a fire. He explained that his goal is to have two people on-shift twenty-four hours a day. Chief Keller explained that the additional staff would allow the Fire Department to respond to medical calls. He explained that the Police Department can assist in cardiac arrests, but they cannot do airways or oxygen. He explained that the paramedics are not guaranteed to be in Town. He stated that there are days that they never see a GEMS unit. Deputy Chief Hullett stated that GEMS does not get to Stanley until 10 am.

Mayor Denton asked at what time the staff members leave. Chief Keller explained that from 7 am to 6 pm, the station is staffed. He explained that night-time response is strictly volunteer. Mayor Denton expressed his concern and stated that it is the Council's responsibility to keep the people of the Town safe. Council Member McMinn stated that he would like to see one SRO and one staff member to cover nights at the Fire Department.

Chief Keller shared new statistics from the additional reporting questions. He stated that out of 111 calls for service, there was no response with an apparatus to nine of those calls. Chief Keller stated that he is personally bothered by this. Chief Keller stated that a motor vehicle accident occurred in front of Dollar Tree where an individual was pinned in the vehicle and Stanley did not respond. He stated that one individual from Alexis responded and had to call for East Gaston which had two members respond. He stated that the victim of the accident was pinned in the vehicle for twenty minutes. He stated that neighboring departments are not getting help from us and will eventually stop responding. He stated that he hopes we do not get to the situation where someone needed us before we have to act on the staffing. He stated that Mount Holly built a new fire department after a mansion burned. Chief Keller stated that Mount Holly got the SAFER grant because of a fire. Manager Jenkins stated that Mount Holly has a stronger tax base to support the funding. Chief Keller explained that they made the decision to build that station after a fire. Chief Keller says that does not want him to be Stanley.

Council Member McMinn asked for clarification if they could have one person at night if that would help. Chief Keller stated yes, that would get a fire truck to the scene. Council Member McMinn stated that the Fire Department is cutting their request back to the bare-minimum of one person at night. Chief Keller stated that having one person on shift every night would be a cost of \$70,000.

Council Member McMinn asked why a firefighter makes so much more than a police officer. Chief Keller stated that this is \$12 per hour, part-time over the sixteen hours that are not covered. Manager Jenkins explained that the staffing is not shifts like the police department. Catherine Greder explained that they are covering the uncovered hours from 6pm to 7am times \$12, not one salary of \$70,000. There are no health benefits associated with this because it is a part-time position. Deputy Chief Hullett stated that there are an additional sixteen hours that need to be covered. Council Member McMinn asked about the number of people. Chief Keller explained that it is not the number of people, it is the number of positions. This would put one person at the Fire Department, twenty-four hours per day.

Manager Jenkins asked Chief Keller if he knew what Cramerton budgets for salaries, as we often use them as a model. Chief Keller stated that he is not sure what amount they have budgeted.

Chief Keller stated that he wants the Council to understand his concerns.

Mayor Denton asked if they could not get the numbers worked out for the current year if Manager Jenkins believes that next year we could cover the costs of staffing. Manager Jenkins explained that it is his hope by the end of 2019 to have funding for staffing. He stated that he hopes Stanley can even apply for the SAFER grant because of the new homes that are being constructed.

Council Member McMinn stated that he does not see an influx coming. Catherine Greder stated that the Town is meeting with a home developer looking to come to Stanley for the first time which would be a substantial addition to our housing. Manager Jenkins stated that he does not want the Fire Department to think that he is going against what they try to do, but the Manager is the caretaker of the funding. He stated that it was bad-timing but the Police Department needs the funding for SRO's and he is not sure of a more important matter during this time. Manger Jenkins said that fire protection is also important and that the budget includes putting \$50,000 back in fund balance and the Council could use that to fund staffing at the Fire Department.

Council Member McMinn asked if the Stanley Police Department volunteered their services to the County or if the County came to us. Manager Jenkins explained that the County came to the Town, the Town did not volunteer their services. He stated that it has been an ongoing, collaborative discussion. Manager Jenkins stated that he largely recommends the Council fund the SRO positions and leave that control with the Stanley Police Department.

Council Member McMinn stated that he thought Manager Jenkins was saying the Council is opposed to SROs. Manager Jenkins clarified that is not what he is saying. Council Member McMinn stated that the County will fill the positions, the Commissioners have made the commitment. Manager Jenkins stated that it is not fair to put these two items against each other.

Council Member Sparrow asked if we could move on with the budget and circle back to staffing. Chief Keller asked to share a few more options. Chief Keller stated that he understands the decision is difficult. He stated that the SAFER grant is still an option. He stated that he understands it is a large undertaking at the end. He stated that he would like to see a plan that the Council is working toward staffing the Fire Department and that they do not forget about the Fire Department.

Council Member Sparrow asked for clarification on the SAFER grant. Chief Keller stated that the SAFER grant covers 75% the first two years, then 25% for the third year and the fourth year the Town takes over. Mayor Denton asked if it could only be for three positions. Chief Keller stated that it could be for just one position. He stated that one position with salary and benefits would be \$49,000, leaving the Town responsible for \$12,000.

Manager Jenkins asked how long Chief Keller thinks it will be before the Town needs a fire truck. Chief Keller stated that one of the trucks is almost thirty years old. Chief Keller stated that there are grant options for fire trucks, as well. Chief Keller explained that the next need will be for a ladder company. Chief Keller explained that during the last ISO inspection, the State wrote a letter to the Chief at the current time, and the letter stated that during the next inspection, the department would be evaluated against not having a ladder company. Chief Keller explained the state would prioritize an engine company, but the federal government would prioritize a ladder company. He explained that ISO ties into insurance rates. He explained that he does not know when we will be assessed next.

Council Member Hart asked how many hydrants are currently out in her neighborhood. Chief Keller stated that he would have to check into exactly which hydrants were out and where.

Council Member Sparrow asked that they continue through the budget.

Chief Keller went over remaining line items, explaining his requests. Chief Keller stated that he has applied for a grant in which the Town would only be responsible for 5% of \$150,000 worth of equipment, if awarded. Chief Keller stated that other municipalities have started receiving rejection letters and we have not yet received one, therefore he believes we have moved forward in the evaluation process. Chief Keller explained which equipment will be replaced with these funds. Manager Jenkins explained that the need is there, regardless and that allowing the grant to pay 95% would be of benefit.

Chief Keller explained that his request includes new iPads and service. These will be on each truck and allow whomever is on truck to navigate to and see call information.

Chief Keller explained that there is also an extreme need for replacement hose. He stated that they test the hose annually and they have lost several sections. He stated that they are also in desperate need of new nozzles.

Chief Keller explained that the Deputy Chief's vehicle has over 150,000 miles and has mechanical issues as well as a major leak. The vehicle fills with inches of water during a good rain. He explained that the vehicle request is to replace this vehicle. The request is for a Tahoe which would carry equipment for the Fire Department, be a command vehicle, and have tools on the vehicle. Council Member McMinn asked if the Explorer was significantly less. Manager Jenkins replied that it was not. Council Member McMinn asked about fuel mileage. Chief Keller stated the vehicle they are looking at would be around 18 mpg.

Council Member McMinn stated that grants are of concern because they may leave the Town on the hook for a lot of money if the state or federal government decides to stop funding what they are used for.


Mayor Denton asked if the Fire Department needed a truck "yesterday". Chief Keller confirmed that they have had a need. He discussed a vehicle that had been given to the department that needed too much work that no mechanic shops in the area would provide and they gave the vehicle back.

Chief Keller explained that staffing is his main concern and he would take that over any equipment or vehicle.

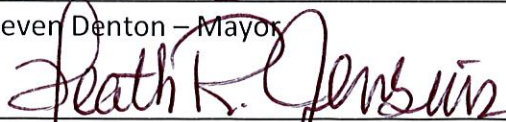
Chief Keller asked if there were any further questions. There were none.

This concluded the May 7, 2018 Budget Workshop.

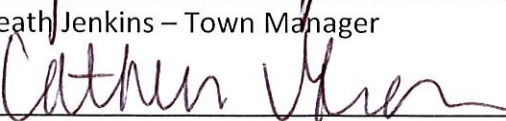
Respectfully Submitted:



Steven Denton – Mayor



Heath Jenkins – Town Manager



Catherine Greder - Town Clerk

